A FREE YEAR-END LEADERSHIP WORKBOOK

Before You Lead Into the New Year

10 Questions to Help Ministry Leaders Reflect, Refocus, and Lead with Clarity

Take 30 minutes to recognize God's faithfulness, clarify your priorities, and plan your next step.

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Lead With Intention

8. What needs to be on my 2027 calendar now? Consider planning, preaching, leadership development, family time, and personal renewal.

9. What important conversation do I need to have before the year ends? Think about encouragement, accountability, clarity, or reconciliation.

10. If God allows us to accomplish one significant thing in 2027, what would I pray it would be? What first step can I take toward it?

REFLECT

PART ONE / REFLECT

Where did I see God at work in the last year?

Leaders can focus so much on the next challenge that they overlook reasons to celebrate His faithfulness. Before planning what's next, recognize what God has already done.

SCRIPTURE FOR REFLECTION

The LORD had done great things for us; we were joyful – Psalm 126:3

CONSIDER THESE PROMPTS

Where did you see spiritual growth, answered prayer, or unexpected opportunities? Who made meaningful progress? What challenges revealed God's faithfulness?

MY REFLECTIONS

TURN REFLECTION INTO ACTION

I will share one story of God's faithfulness with _____ by _____.

PART ONE / REFLECT

What strengthened me this year? What drained me?

Ministry can bring a wealth of demands, but also seasons of growth. Recognizing both helps serve more with intentionality. Reflect on the people, practices, and moments that strengthened you in 2026—and the experiences that drained you.

SCRIPTURE FOR REFLECTION

Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has appointed you as overseers, to shepherd the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood. – Acts 20:28

CONSIDER THESE PROMPTS

What moments and seasons were life-giving for me? What steps can I take to lean into these more? What moments kept me from thriving? In what ways can I use this to plan for the new year?

MY REFLECTIONS

TURN REFLECTION INTO ACTION

My next step: I will _____ by _____.

PART ONE / REFLECT

What did I spend time, energy, and resources on that produced little meaningful ministry fruit?

Taking a moment to reflect might illuminate some areas of life and ministry that need to be stopped. These activities might not be bad, and there may have been a very good reason to do them. To grow, however, most likely means letting go of something to make room for what God has next.

SCRIPTURE FOR REFLECTION

He gives strength to the faint and strengthens the powerless. – Isaiah 40:29

CONSIDER THESE PROMPTS

What was a ministry that no longer excites me? If we stopped a specific ministry event, what door would that open? Does our calendar represent a busy church or a thriving church? What scheduling changes need to take place so we can be more Kingdom-focused?

MY REFLECTIONS

TURN REFLECTION INTO ACTION

My next step: I will _____ by _____.

REFOCUS

PART TWO / REFOCUS

What is the most important spiritual or leadership priority I need to address personally before entering 2027?

In ministry, we make time for what we prioritize. As leaders, we must take time in to consider our own personal growth. If we are not growing spiritually then we cannot expect to pour into others within our ministry context. Too often a leader's competency can take them farther than their character can sustain them. Spiritual growth is vital for ministry leaders.

SCRIPTURE FOR REFLECTION

Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has appointed you as overseers, to shepherd the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood. – Acts 20:28

CONSIDER THESE PROMPTS

What steps can I take in the new year to "be on guard" for myself? In what ways have I been on guard for the flock while neglecting my own spiritual growth? How might I shift from a focus of "doing for Jesus" to clearly engaging in the spiritual rhythm of "being with Jesus"?

MY REFLECTIONS

TURN REFLECTION INTO ACTION

My next step: I will _____ by _____.

PART TWO / REFOCUS

Who are the people I need to intentionally develop and invest in during the coming year?

In the Gospels, we learn from the greatest leader of all, Jesus. He developed and invested in a group that ended up changing the world. Sometimes we simply need to look around to see those in whom God has entrusted us to invest.

SCRIPTURE FOR REFLECTION

He found Philip and told him, "Follow me." – John 1:43

CONSIDER THESE PROMPTS

Who is my one? What church members keep coming to me sharing how they invited others to church? Who has God placed in my path where I live, work, and play? In what ways can I begin to lead volunteers or staff in my church?

MY REFLECTIONS

TURN REFLECTION INTO ACTION

My next step: I will _____ by _____.

PART TWO / REFOCUS

What is one ministry priority that deserves greater attention in the new year?

Consider what outcomes would make the new year exceptional. Now, think through what it would take to see that outcome by year's end. Then narrow the focus towards priorities. Finally, choose one priority to begin the new year focusing on.

SCRIPTURE FOR REFLECTION

But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word. – Acts 6:4.

CONSIDER THESE PROMPTS

What is the mission and vision of our church? Is there alignment towards these? If we narrowed our focus to one ministry priority, how would that impact our church and our community? What is dividing my attention and how can I delegate in order to focus on a key priority?

MY REFLECTIONS

TURN REFLECTION INTO ACTION

My next step: I will _____ by _____.

PART TWO / REFOCUS

Where have fear, comfort, or the demands of the familiar kept me from taking a necessary step of faith?

Every leader faces challenges. Some of these challenges are external, while others are internal. We serve in demanding roles and the thought of stepping out of the norm can riddle us with anxiety and even fear. God, however, can break down walls and strongholds. Therefore, we must yield in obedience to Him and Him alone.

SCRIPTURE FOR REFLECTION

Commit your activities to the LORD, and your plans will be established. – Proverbs 16:3

CONSIDER THESE PROMPTS

What might I do differently if I approached my ministry with fresh eyes? What is one step of obedience I need to take, even if I do not know the outcome? Where have I been hesitant to change, even though I recognize change may be necessary? If the church hired someone new in my role, what would that person do? Why don't we do that?

MY REFLECTIONS

TURN REFLECTION INTO ACTION

My next step: I will _____ by _____.

MOVE FORWARD

PART THREE / MOVE FORWARD

What needs to be on my new year calendar now?

Sometimes in ministry we become a prisoner of the moment. We float to the next sermon, Bible study, hospital visit, committee meeting, etc. It has been said, “you have to run your day or your day will run you!” Therefore, consider what you can begin to plan for the upcoming year. Getting ahead on calendar creates margins for leaders to focus on what truly matters.

SCRIPTURE FOR REFLECTION

Teach me to do your will, for you are my God. May your gracious Spirit lead me on level ground. – Psalm 143:10

CONSIDER THESE PROMPTS

How can I plan my preaching/teaching for the first 6 months of the new year? When can I sit with my wife to plan out family time and vacations for the new year? What would personal renewal time look like and where should I place it on next year’s calendar?

MY REFLECTIONS

TURN REFLECTION INTO ACTION

My next step: I will _____ by _____.

PART THREE / MOVE FORWARD

What important conversation do I need to have before the year ends?

Every ministry issue has a name attached to it. Ministry is a people business. Therefore, it is important for a leader to consider who you need to meet with in your circle of influence. Each conversation that takes place now might be able to lead to more alignment in the new year.

SCRIPTURE FOR REFLECTION

The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me. LORD, your faithful love endures forever; do not abandon the work of your hands. – Psalm 138:8

CONSIDER THESE PROMPTS

Who needs the most encouragement from me right now? Who needs accountabilty as we close out this year? Who is someone that needs clarity from me? Is there any relationship that needs reconciling before the new year?

MY REFLECTIONS

TURN REFLECTION INTO ACTION

My next step: I will _____ by _____.

PART THREE / MOVE FORWARD

If God allows us to accomplish one significant thing in the new year, what would I pray it would be?

God can do immeasurably more than we can fathom. No matter what the last year has looked like for your ministry, the Lord can do immeasurably more in the new year. When we look to Him, seek Him, and faithfully walk the narrow path His hand will guide us and His favor will shine upon us.

SCRIPTURE FOR REFLECTION

Now to him who is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think according to the power that works in us – Ephesians 3:20

CONSIDER THESE PROMPTS

What is the first step I can take toward a God-sized vision for the new year? How should my prayers change? What is the big audacious goal God is calling us to?

MY REFLECTIONS

TURN REFLECTION INTO ACTION

My next step: I will _____ by _____.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

Your Next Faithful Step

The purpose of this workbook is not simply to help you plan another year. It is to help you pause, recognize God's faithfulness, and consider how you can lead with greater intentionality.

You don't need to have every detail of 2027 figured out. But you can begin with one faithful step.

As you finish working through this resource, consider the following:

01 / My Priority for 2027

02 / Someone Who Can Help Me

03 / My Next Step in the Next 30 Days

Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock... - Acts 20:28

As you enter a new year of ministry, pay attention not only to what God has called you to do, but also to the leader He is shaping you to become.

Keep Growing with The Timothy Project

Find practical resources, encouragement, and opportunities to connect with other ministry leaders through our articles, podcast, equip sessions, cohorts, and annual conference.

Visit www.thetimothyproject.org to connect and thrive in the new year!

YOU DON'T HAVE TO LEAD *alone*